



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RAYTOWN WOMAN SENTENCED IN CHECK FORGERY SCHEME

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced a Raytown, Mo., woman was sentenced in federal court today for her involvement in a conspiracy to manufacture and pass counterfeit checks.

Kelly A. Owens, 37, of Raytown, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey this morning to four years and three months in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Owens** to pay restitution in the amount of \$45,056.

On Sept. 23, 2003, **Owens** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bank fraud and to make, utter, and possess counterfeit checks, as well as possessing, making or uttering counterfeit securities or checks. Owens is one of seven defendants who have pleaded guilty to an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on May 14, 2003.

Between May 1 and Aug. 31, 2002, Graves said, co-defendant **Lisa K. Allen**, 44, of Raytown, – while employed at Butternut Bread Store in Raytown – provided retail customer names, addresses, Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, and bank account information to **Owens** for the purpose of manufacturing counterfeit checks. **Allen** has pleaded guilty to her role in the conspiracy.

Owens admitted that she prepared – and caused to be prepared and possessed – counterfeit checks and false identification documents. The checks were cashed at banks and retail stores in Missouri and Kansas, Graves said, with the defendants sharing the cash proceeds and property obtained through this fraud scheme.

On May 1, 2001, and March 31, 2003, **Owens** manufactured counterfeit personal and business checks. **Owens** provided those counterfeit checks to **Yoekum, Allen, Hill, Foster** and **Griffin**, Graves said, who passed or negotiated the counterfeit checks at various businesses in

Missouri and Kansas. On Aug. 15, 2002, **Owens** and **Hill** possessed counterfeit checks, Kansas driver's licenses, a laminator and other materials utilized to manufacture counterfeit checks and false identification documents. **Owens** also made, uttered and possessed a counterfeit check drawn on the account of Ford Motor Company on Dec. 5, 2002.

Co-defendant **David W. Foster**, 29, of Kansas City, was sentenced on Nov. 24, 2003, to one year in federal prison, followed by two years of supervised release. The court also ordered Foster to pay restitution in the amount of \$39,894.74. On Aug. 6, 2003, **Foster** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to manufacture and pass counterfeit checks at various businesses in Missouri and Kansas between May 1, 2001, and March 31, 2003.

Several additional co-defendants in this case also have pleaded guilty for their involvement in the conspiracy and are awaiting sentencing hearings. **Christopher R. Larabee**, 24, of Independence, Mo.; **Terri L. Hill**, 39, of Stanley, Kan.; and **Jeremy R. Riley**, 25, **Jeremiah D. Kout**, 26, and **William J. Yeokum**, 22, all of Kansas City, Mo., each have pleaded guilty to their roles in the conspiracy to manufacture and pass counterfeit checks.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney K. Michael Warner. It was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service; the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department; the Raytown, Mo., Police Department; the Platte County, Mo., Sheriff's Department; the Overland Park, Kan., Police Department; the Holton, Kan., Police Department; the Shawnee, Kan., Police Department; the Blue Springs, Mo., Police Department; the Grandview, Mo., Police Department; the Harrisonville, Mo., Police Department; the Cass county, Mo., Sheriff's Office; and the North Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

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